

Claims

The claims are amended as follows:

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus comprising:

a first information extractor to extract, from a tag region of an image file, information represented as a value related to image processing of image data of the image file according to a first extraction method;

a second information extractor to extract the information represented as the value located within the image data of the image file according to a second extraction method different from the first extraction method, only when the information cannot be extracted by the first information extractor, the second extraction method taking a longer time than the first extraction method, wherein the information extracted by the second extraction method is information that cannot be visually seen, the information is MTF characteristics of a scanner that has scanned an image corresponding to the image data, the MTF characteristics have been added to the image data of the image file; and

an image processing unit to perform the image processing based on the information extracted by one of the first information extractor and the second information extractor.

5. (Original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein

the first information extractor is operable to extract the information from a tag that has been added to the image data, and

the second information extractor is operable to extract the information from an electronic watermark that has been embedded in the image data.

6. (Original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein

the first information extractor is operable to extract the information from a tag that has been added to the image data, and

the second information extractor is operable to extract the information from a specific pattern that has been added to the image data.

7. (Original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the image processing unit is operable to perform a predetermined image processing with respect to the image data when the information cannot be extracted by the first information extractor and the second information extractor.

8. (Original) The image processing apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising a third information extractor to extract image characteristics from the image data when the information cannot be extracted by the first information extractor and the second information extractor, wherein

the image processing unit is operable to perform the image processing based on the image characteristics extracted.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) An image processing method comprising:

extracting, from a tag region of an image file, information represented as a value related to image processing of image data of the image file according to a first extraction method;

extracting the information represented as the value located within the image data of the image file according to a second extraction method different from the first extraction method, only when the information cannot be extracted by the first extraction method, the second extraction method taking a longer time than the first extraction method, wherein the information extracted by the second extraction method is information that cannot be visually seen, the information is MTF characteristics of a scanner that has scanned an image corresponding to the image data, the MTF characteristics have been added to the image data of the image file; and performing the image processing based on the information extracted.

11. (Currently Amended) An image processing system comprising an image input apparatus and an image output apparatus, wherein the image input apparatus includes:

a first information addition unit to add to image data information represented as a value related to perform a first type of image processing of image data of an image file according to a

first addition method as first information; and

a second information addition unit to add the information represented as the value related to perform the first type of image processing to the image data according to a second addition method different from the first information addition method as second information, wherein at least one of the first and the second information added is not lost even when a second type of image processing is performed with respect to the image data, and the image output apparatus includes:

a first information extractor to extract, from a tag region of the image file, the first information represented as the value related to perform the first type of image processing according to a first extraction method;

a second information extractor to extract the second information represented as the value related to perform the first type of image processing from the image data according to a second extraction method different from the first extraction method, only when the information cannot be extracted by the first information extractor, the second extraction method taking a longer time than the first extraction method, wherein the second information extracted by the second extraction method is information that cannot be visually seen, the second information is MTF characteristics of a scanner that has scanned an image corresponding to the image data, the MTF characteristics have been added to the image data of the image file; and

an image processing unit to perform the first type of image processing based on the information extracted by one of the first information extractor and the second information extractor.